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John Allen Chalk: Personal Correspondence

John Allen Chalk

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7-7-1970

From/To: Marvin Steffins (Chalk's reply filed first)

Marvin Steffins

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July 7, 1970

Mr. Marvin Steffins  
P. O. Box 325  
Texarkana, Texas 75501

Dear Mary:

Dudley Lynch was named Director of Communications for Campus Evangelism three months before its death. He was in charge of all the publications being used by Campus Evangelism. I know Dudley Lynch well and appreciate what I believe is his honest and sincere concern for truth, regardless of what that truth might mean. I do hope that you will temper whatever you learn from your close sources about Dudley Lynch, with the kind of spiritual judgment that I have seen you use so wisely in the past. If you have any further questions that you want to ask directly you can write Dudley Lynch himself in care of the Arizona Republic, Phoenix, Arizona.

I deeply regret the situation that arose over "Midnight Cowboy." I hope that you have not learned what you have learned of it through Art Carmichael. He is possessed of strong prejudices, not only against preachers who do anything but preach, but also against black people "long hairs" and almost anybody else who isn't exactly like him. I am doing all I know how to do to love Art through this matter even though he has made it extremely difficult for me. I nevertheless accept that and appreciate him for his deep and genuine concerns.

The enclosed copy of the statement made on Sunday morning following this incident to Highland church is self-explanatory. It is a verbatim transcript of exactly what I said to the Highland congregation. I hope you will note carefully the amplification of the remarks made in the newspaper on Friday in the sermon on Sunday. The key to understanding my newspaper statement is the sentence, "unfortunately, many will view this film as standard entertainment fare rather than a strong socio-psychological commentary on basic human need - religious need, I might add." In the Sunday morning statement I made it very clear that as "commercial entertainment" the film is both obscene and harmful. I regret that this was not conveyed adequately in the newspaper article. My bad judgment was in making any kind of statement about the film. I saw the film at the invitation of the newspaper and responded as a Christian man according to my best spiritual insights. This, however, was highly inappropriate and in the worst



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possible judgment for Abilene conditions. I deeply regret this and only hope I have not destroyed my ministry here.

Would you please pray for Art Carmichael's attitude toward me as well as my attitude toward Art and toward the many others who are so deeply hurt. Your prayers for my greater surrender to Jesus and clear evidence of his control in my life will be deeply appreciated.

Your brother,

John Allen Chalk

JAC:lc

P. S. Please do not make copies of this statement. I am deeply concerned about the way it can be misused by almost anyone who would so desire. I would also like to request that you do not allow the statement that I send you out of your own hands. In the hands of unscrupulous brethren it could be used to completely destroy me and my effectiveness as a gospel preacher. I thank you for your trust in this matter.

C  
O  
P  
Y

MS

24 June 1970

Mr. John Allen Chalk  
Minister  
Highland Church of Christ  
Abilene, Texas

Dear John:

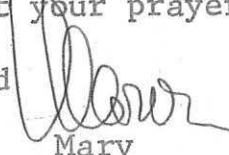
Just a line to ask a couple of favors...

- (1) I wrote to Jim Bevis about the relationship of Dudley Lynch to Campus Evangelism. What do you know of Lynch? I was sick about the demise of CE but understand better the circumstances which must have surrounded the final decision if the reaction I have noted from certain quarters re: Lynch had anything to do with it.
- (2) I had the enclosed Xerox passed on to me, on request, when I learned about it. I also understand you made a statement to the congregation the Sunday following the story in the paper. I would be grateful if you would send along a few lines expressing the gist of your response.

We are all well and praising the Lord -- if you or any of your family are planning a trip to Tennessee, please plan to stop over with us here - we would enjoy the time together.

As you probably know, Art C. and I went to Colombia and Panama and the Lord blessed. We are embarking on an ambitious program to enlist the support of all who will participate in the development of a series of daily programs (52 weeks, Monday thru Friday = 260 programs) each lesson preceded by a chapter of the New Testament (260 chapters) with a view to going through the N.T. in one year with an emphasis (dual) that will present the Way of Salvation and also be a source of strength and edification for the Child of God. I covet your prayers and participation --

Much love in the Lord



Marv